

## **Florence Township Council Regular Session 06/02/21**

Florence, New Jersey  
June 2, 2021

The Florence Township Council held a regular meeting on the above date in the Municipal Complex, 711 Broad Street, Florence, New Jersey. Members of the public were welcome to attend in person or to attend virtually via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Garganio at 7:00 p.m. Council President Garganio led the Salute to the Flag.

The Opening Statement was read by the township clerk: This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice was published in the Burlington County Times on January 10, 2021; placed on the Township website, and given to the Trenton Times for information.

### **ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Paul Ostrander, Jerry Sandusky, David Woolston, Bruce Garganio

Also Present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie; Stephen Fazekas, Township Administrator; Kelly Grant, Township Solicitor; Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk; Jenise Silinsky, Deputy Township Clerk

Absent: None

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Regular Meeting of May 5, 2021
- Closed Session of May 12, 2021
- Closed Session of May 19, 2021

Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to approve the minutes as submitted. Voice vote – all ayes.

### **FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Baldorossi to approve the **Treasurer's Bill List**.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

- YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Garganio
  - NOES: None
  - ABSENT: None
- Unanimous vote – Motion carried

### **REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

### **APPLICATIONS**

A. Riverfront School PTO, On-Premise Raffle License, June 17, 2021, 6:00 pm.

Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Baldorossi to approve the application. Voice vote – all ayes.

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### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council President Garganio opened the meeting up to the public at this time.

Gordon Dawson, 2 Acorn Court, stated that a neighbor has a port-a-potty in their side yard, behind the fence but it is still clearly visible from the street. The Board of Health will only take action if it becomes an odor problem. He said the homeowner explained that they got it for the convenience of their guests so they don't have to go through the home to use the restroom when they are using the pool. He stated that is an eyesore and it is detrimental to property values. He thanked Council for the opportunity to voice his concerns on the subject.

John Gladwell, Jr., 240 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, voiced various concerns. He stated that there is a need for crosswalks in various locations throughout the township and possibly a pedestrian overpass over Route 130 in the future. He mentioned that there is a sizeable hole at the intersection of Delaware and Wallace Avenues. He asked about putting a skate park in the Roebling Park along the waterfront. And, while he agrees with the idea of not allowing residents to have port-a-potties in their yards he is asking if there could be facilities in the park along the pathway along with some type of exercise equipment for different age groups. He also noticed that there is not a place for people to fish in Roebling. Also lighting on the pathway for safety. He asked what types of positions are open for the different committees and boards for the town and if there are any offers on the old bank on Main Street in Roebling. And he would like to speak with Mayor and Council about the old Jabbo's building on 4<sup>th</sup> and Hornberger Avenues to possibly put a local business in.

Council President Garganio said that the safety crossings on the various roadways is an easy evaluation and he thinks Council will support that but it has to be done properly. Administrator Fazekas explained that a shared services agreement was signed with Burlington County for the same pedestrian walkway crossing like at Front and Broad Street is being installed at Hornberger and Delaware Avenues.

He also explained that we are in the process right now with the finalization of the Master Plan, a lot of the things that he is asking about are included in that. We are looking to make a waterfront zone at the Roebling Park with the possibility of a boat dock with restaurants and things of that nature. That Master Plan is being finalized so hopefully in the fall we will be setting something up to have a developer come in and take a look at it and see what we can do.

Mayor Wilkie mentioned that he and Councilman Baldorossi had a meeting with the park committee and a fishing pier was part of the county grant and was supposed to be completed years ago by the county but it has not been done so he is going to speak to our engineer and see what we can do about that. He also explained that, to prevent further deterioration, the bank was purchased in Roebling, the roof was patched and everything was sealed up and it is going to take a lot of money to clean it up but that is being put in to place. The same with Jabbo's, the roof finally got put on a few years ago and public works did some work around there recently cleaning the facility up and we are trying to do things one step at a time. The Mayor said that he will set up a meeting with Mr. Gladstone.

Administrator Fazekas explained that a restroom is being installed along the walking path behind the municipal building under the county parks grant and is due in within the next month or so. We do acknowledge that restrooms are needed. As part of the Delaware River Heritage trail, they will be installing a structure for a port-a-potty to go into at the end of Tenth Avenue, by the pathway.

Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was the Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Woolston to close the public portion of the meeting. Voice vote – All ayes.

## **Florence Township Council Regular Session 06/02/21**

### **PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION OF 2021 MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

Council President Garganio opened the meeting up to the public at this time.

Gordon Dawson, 2 Acorn Court, expressed his appreciation as a taxpayer to the Mayor, Council and administration for remaining fiscally responsible and keeping taxes down for many years. This can only be done because of the way the money is administered and he thanked everyone involved in that.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard it was a motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to close the public portion. Voice vote – All ayes.

Administrator Fazekas explained that this year we are under State review and the State has been behind in their reviews. He gave credit to our auditor, CFOs and Treasurer for their hard work. We have had the budget up and got notified late yesterday of some changes that the State requested we make to our budget. This will not change the tax rate, there is still no tax increase this year, but we had to do this amendment to comply with what the State gave us before we formally adopt the budget. He thanked everyone who got it all together and for the preparation of the resolution so it could be passed this evening.

Auditor Mike Holt explained that this is a fiscally sound budget. The same services are being provided to the citizens of Florence Township as last year. The budget is down about \$127,000 and he congratulated the Township on another year of no tax increase.

CFO Matt Holman thanked everyone for their hard work and explained that many townships are not able to adopt because of the late turnaround from the State but thanks to the help of Treasurer Michelle Chiemiego and Administrator Fazekas we are able to get it in and go ahead and adopt with the slight changes that are in the amendment.

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Woolston to approve budget Resolution No. 2021-127 as amended.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Garganio

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Unanimous vote – Motion carried

### **RESOLUTIONS**

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2021-110**

**Authorize Placement of Liens for Property Maintenance Violation**

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2021-111**

**Refund Certain Tax Overpayments**

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2021-112**

**Authorize Refund POD Permit Fee**

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 113**

**Renew ABC License Pipa Holdings, LLC**

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 114**

**Renew ABC License Florence Wine & Liquor**

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**RESOLUTION NO. 115**

**Renew ABC License American Slovak Citizens Club**

**RESOLUTION NO. 116**

**Renew ABC License Jay & Pinali, LLC t/a Town Liquor**

**RESOLUTION NO. 117**

**Renew ABC License MAB Pad Center, Inc., t/a Liquor Barn**

**RESOLUTION NO. 118**

**Authorize Filing of 2022 NJDOT Municipal Aid – Resurfacing 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
from Broad Street to Cedar Lane**

**RESOLUTION NO. 119**

**Authorize Filing of 2022 NJDOT Municipal Aid – Bikeways Project – Resurfacing Broad Street  
from West Front Street to End**

**RESOLUTION NO. 120**

**Authorize Filing of 2022 NJDOT Municipal Aid – Bikeways Project – Phase 1 Fifth Street  
from Front Street to Walnut Street**

**RESOLUTION NO. 121**

**Read Budget by Title Only**

**RESOLUTION NO. 122**

**Adopt 2021 Municipal Budget**

**RESOLUTION NO. 123**

**Renew ABC License Francis W. Robbins Post 194 American Legion**

**RESOLUTION NO. 124**

**Renew SSA with Bordentown for Animal Control Officer**

**RESOLUTION NO. 125**

**Approving a Redevelopment Agreement between Florence Township,  
DOMO Urban Renewal LLC and DOMO Commercial Urban Renewal LLC**

Administrator Fazekas explained that Resolution No. 2021-121 is to read the Budget by title only so you do not have to go through line item by line item. Copies were available to those in attendance and it has also been posted on the website and has been advertised for the past month in the newspaper.

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Sandusky to approve Resolution No. 2021-121.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Garganio

NOES: None

ABSENT: None Unanimous vote – Motion carried

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Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Sandusky to approve Resolution No. 2021-122.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Garganio

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Unanimous vote – Motion carried

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Woolston to approve Resolution Nos. 2021-110 through 2021-120 and 2021-123 through 2021-125.

Administrator Fazekas explained that regarding Resolution Nos. 2021-118 through 2021-120 notice from the state was received to start filing for the 2022 NJDOT Municipal Aid Grants. This year we are going to have Wilbur Henry Drive resurfaced under that grant and we are going to put in for Ninth Street to be done from Broad to Cedar Lane and also Broad Street from Front and Ninth Street to be completed.

Upon working with Rails to Trails we want to get the pathway in from Walnut to Eyre Street and we want to do some type of configuration from Eyre Street to West Front Street. We are putting in for a municipal aid pathway project grant for that to include some parking down across from the RD Wood field, expand the park that is down on the 1000 block of West Front Street and, once IPT West is completed, part of that plan is that they are going to put a pathway down alongside their facility to a scenic overlook. We will need these resolutions in order to proceed.

Regarding the redevelopment agreement with DOMO, Resolution No. 2021-135, Council passed a resolution and this is just a wording change. They are actually having a commercial section for the hotel there so we have to have the resolution reflect that change. Tom Hastie explained that the resolution that was adopted previously identified the parties to the agreement as the township and DOMO LLC and in actuality it will now be the Township, DOMO and DOMO Commercial. At an abundance of caution, he asked that we do this new resolution reflecting the three parties to the agreement.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Garganio

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Unanimous vote – Motion carried

### **ORDINANCES**

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 2021-115**

#### **Adopting a Redevelopment Plan for Project Freedom Block 120, Lots 4.02 and 9 (Intro & 1<sup>st</sup> Read) (2<sup>nd</sup> Read, Public Hearing & Adopt 6/16/2021)**

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Sandusky to approve Ordinance No. 2021-115.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Garganio

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Unanimous vote – Motion carried

### **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND OFFICERS**

None at this time.

## **Florence Township Council Regular Session 06/02/21**

### **REPORTS: ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Mayor**

Mayor Wilkie explained that on Memorial Day weekend Post 194 did their traditional visitation of the memorials and the cemeteries on Sunday. On Monday, Post 39 held their services in Roebling and visited the memorials and the cemeteries in the Village of Roebling. It was well attended Monday and a lot of boy scouts participated. There was a lot of volunteer work done in preparation for this by the garden club as well as the shade tree commission. They planted flowers and put mulch down around the municipal building, they worked to make sure the eagle monument on Broad was prepared with new mulch and topsoil and the Florence Garden club went ahead and planted flowers there, as well as recently redoing the WWII memorial in centennial park.

Patriotic Day preparations are underway and the museum has a garden tour coming up. There is no Council meeting next week, the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Administrator**

Administrator Fazekas stated that we received notice this week that we will be receiving \$28,330.11 from the Clean Communities Grant. This is now being handled by Marty Eckert and he did a good job getting this together. The Water and Sewer Engineering report was distributed and next week starts Potts Mill Road Phase II. The residents have been notified by door knockers and Phase III will begin shortly after.

There was a bond sale last week on the \$10 million BANS. We received .18% rating which equates to 1 year interest on \$10 million and we will be paying just shy of \$18,300. Our standard rating of AA stayed consistent and we had the highest that we could on the BANS an SP-1+ rating. That is a compliment to the Auditor, CFOs and Treasurer Michelle Chiemiego for all of the work that they did to get us to have such a low rating on that. It was a very good interest rate that we got on that \$10 million BAN.

Covid testing is every Wednesday at the old Public Works building from 9am-1pm. Tomorrow, June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 3pm-6pm in the Council chambers, we will be working with the Burlington County Health Department to do Covid vaccinations.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Council President Garganio asked if we could try and prioritize a meeting with Joe Brickley and the County to try and go over some of our traffic issues before our next meeting? He also asked for a quick update regarding the new website.

Administrator Fazekas stated that he has had communication with Mr. Brickley on Friday. They have had personnel changes and a new engineer was just hired last week and she has been brought up to speed on those road projects and will reach out to us shortly on that. The same with the transit meeting for Delaware and Railroad Avenues, he and Joe Brickley are trying to set up a meeting.

Regarding the website, the departments have received a questionnaire asking what they want on the website as far as questions, forms, etc and once we have all of that information, we will start building the website. We are going to be switching over to having a website that we will be able to administer because right now we administer our website through a third-party vendor.

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### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Bamboo – Invasive**

Mayor Wilkie explained that a resident reached out to him a few weeks ago regarding bamboo in his neighbor's yard and over the years it has continued to expand. When he has approached the neighbor about the encroaching bamboo, the neighbor agreed to take of the problem but nothing has been done. The roots just continue to expand and destroy. We currently have no ordinance against it. Administrator Fazekas explained that with guidance from Council he can pursue this and he will proceed if Council agrees. Council agreed.

#### **B. Portable Restrooms**

In response to Mr. Dawson's concerns along with the residents in that area, Mayor Wilkie stated that he is not too familiar with these things other than when you bring one in for a special event. It is not designed to be a long-term situation. Other than the boat ramp and the athletic fields for the convenience of the residents, it is not normally in a residential area. He asked Council what action they would like to take?

Councilman Sandusky stated that he agrees that they are nice for functions but not in a residential area. Councilman Ostrander agreed, as a temporary basis they should be allowed but there should be a timeframe. Administrator Fazekas stated that if Council is in agreement, he will work with the solicitor to draw up an ordinance to bring back to Council to review. Council agreed.

### **BOARD OF HEALTH**

None at this time.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

None at this time.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council President Garganio opened the meeting up to the public at this time.

Kristan Marter, 220 East Front Street, asked about the bylaws or requirements needed to participate in committees, boards and commissions in town. Mayor Wilkie stated that the bylaws are listed in the code book which establishes each one of the committees and the qualifications, if there are any other than being a resident in the town.

Ms. Marter voiced her frustration because she has been requesting to be a part of any of the committees to be able to participate in our town for years.

Mayor Wilkie explained that on certain appointments he chooses people with diverse backgrounds that he believes are appropriate for those positions. He has yet to see her resume and she is currently running for a seat on Council which has now put her on the elected side and while she may see it as an advantage to being on a committee, it could also be viewed as a disadvantage. For the time being, he feels that the best thing for her to do is to continue to be out in the public voicing concerns and communicating to residents what is going on from her perspective.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, motion was made by Ostrander, seconded by Sandusky to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Voice vote – All ayes.

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Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Woolston to adjourn to Closed Session at 8:03 p.m. where no action will be taken. Voice vote – all ayes.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:14 p.m. No action was taken. Motion of Woolston, seconded by Sandusky to adjourn. Voice vote – all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC  
Township Clerk

/js